safemeat

Dear Stakeholder

I am pleased to present to you the Annual Report for SAFEMEAT for the 2014-15 financial year.

SAFEMEAT continues to meet many challenges which can only satisfy the diverse range of regulatory and commercial needs of all of those organisations which contribute to our deliberations by a combination of trust, good will and common sense.

SAFEMEAT continues to promote best practice management systems and implement strategies for the safe and hygienic production of red meat and pork in Australia. Its success can be measured through progress made on key initiatives such as the National Livestock Identification Systems (NLIS), National Vendor Declarations (NVD) and Livestock Production Assurance (LPA).

This Annual Report describes SAFEMEAT's progress against its terms of reference and summarises critical policy issues and work programs overseen by SAFEMEAT during 2014-15. These are reflected in the SAFEMEAT Business Plan.

A number of key outcomes during the year were:

- Continuing progress on the important SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review. This Review is a critical step in defining the vision for the future and the assessment of the requirements for systems to support the vision

- Continued improvement in NLIS systems for cattle and sheep and goats. This includes SAFEMEAT endorsement of the NLIS Cattle Standards to replace the previous Operational Rules

- Monitoring of progress in the adoption of strengthened measures to improve NLIS compliance in the meat processing sector

- Progressing a way forward in addressing the outcomes of the Australian Government's NLIS Sheep and Goat Decision Regulation Impact Statement

- Agreeing to phase-out all but the current LPA NVDs before the end of 2015

- Agreeing national assessment criteria and approval process for determining on-farm food safety system equivalency

- Investigations into the use of cotton trash and failed cotton crops as a potential emergency drought feed

- Establishing a working group to coordinate actions to address rodenticide residue issues in the pig industry

- Finalising a review of the SAFEMEAT locust control publication

- Meeting of SAFEMEAT Committee Chairs to ensure Committee activities are properly coordinated and managed.

The contribution of the many committees and working groups, with SAFEMEAT involvement and support, continues to provide a valuable mechanism for industry to maintain a high level of food safety and market access for its products. This work has enabled targeted approaches to improving industry quality assurance programs through education, and fostering a partnership approach between industry and governments. Examples of this can be found in the monitoring of residues in livestock and the improving levels of compliance with NLIS requirements throughout the livestock supply chain.

It has been stated in previous annual reports, and I consider it worth repeating, that SAFEMEAT continues to be the most important vehicle for managing food safety and product integrity issues across the whole red meat, pork and livestock industries in Australia. The success of SAFEMEAT is due to the ongoing commitment and co-operation of its partner members.

I cannot stress enough the importance of maintaining the SAFEMEAT structure and to guard against complacency in times when there are no significant issues of concern or crises. As a strong industry and government partnership, we need to remain vigilant, focussed and committed to ensure we stay abreast of current and emerging issues so that the system can be activated at short notice if this becomes necessary.

I would like to thank the SAFEMEAT Partnership and the SAFEMEAT Executive and their respective member organisations for their continued commitment and contributions in 2014-15. I would also like to acknowledge Meat & Livestock Australia Ltd (MLA), Animal Health Australia, the Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, State and Territory jurisdictions, the various industry peak bodies and the Secretariat for their considerable efforts made during the year. It is important that membership continues to be drawn from the senior levels within representative organisations to ensure SAFEMEAT objectives are able to be met.

Yours sincerely

Ross Keane
Chairman
17 November 2015

The primary role of SAFEMEAT, as specified in the Meat Industry Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), is to oversee and promote sound management systems to deliver safe and hygienic product to the market place. SAFEMEAT promotes rationalisation of regulation and standards within the industry, drives the implementation of strategies to ensure meat safety and hygiene and monitors industry performance in respect of these.

SAFEMEAT Terms of Reference

(a) To work with the objective of establishing world best practice in ensuring the safety of red meat and pork products.

(b) To ensure each meat industry sector implements sound management systems to ensure safe and hygienic product is delivered to the market place.

(c) To ensure adequate and nationally consistent government standards and regulations relating to meat safety and hygiene.

(d) To ensure that effective crisis management strategies are put in place by the appropriate meat industry sectors and, to this end, ensure that there is a fully integrated and effective communications network.

(e) To develop and provide relevant information about current and emerging meat safety and hygiene issues.

SAFEMEAT Structure

The SAFEMEAT Partnership met on the following dates during 2014-15:

- 24 November 2014

- 23 June 2015

The SAFEMEAT Partnership members for 2014-15 were:

- Chair – Mr Ross Keane
- Australian Dairy Farmers Ltd – Mr Noel Campbell
- Australian Government Department of Agriculture – Dr Paul Grimes (to 11 June 2015) then Mr Daryl Quinlivan; and Dr Mark Schipp
- Australian Livestock Exporters' Council – Mr Peter Kane (to November 2014) then Mr Simon Crean
- Australian Lot Feeders' Association – Mr Don Mackay
- Australian Meat Industry Council - Mr Noel Kelson and Dr John Langbridge
- Cattle Council of Australia – Mr Andrew Ogilvie (to November 2014) then Mr Howard Smith
- Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (representing State/Territory Agriculture Departments) – Dr Allison Crook
- Safe Food Queensland (representing State/Territory Meat Industry Authorities) – Dr Barbara Wilson
- Sheepmeat Council of Australia – Mr Ian McColl (to November 2014) then Mr Jeff Murray
- Australian Pork Limited – Ms Deb Kerr
- Goat Industry Council of Australia – Mr Patrick Hutchinson

Observers:

- Animal Health Australia – Ms Kathleen Plowman and Mr Duncan Rowland
- Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association – Mr Andy Madigan
- Meat and Livestock Australia Ltd – Mr Richard Norton
- Red Meat Advisory Council – Mr Angus Hobson
- Wool Producers Australia – Mr Steven Harrison
- Australian Livestock Marketing Association – Mr Tony White (to May 2015) then Ms Kate McGilvray
- Dairy Australia – Dr Robin Condron

The SAFEMEAT Partnership is supported by the Executive Group.

The Executive Group meets regularly to implement and monitor the Business Plan work program. Teleconferences or special meetings to address particular issues were also held during the year and involved industry, government and the Executive Group. In 2014-15 the Executive Group comprised the following members:

- Chair – Mr Stephen Bailey
- Australian Dairy Farmers Ltd – Mr Terry Toohey (to April 2015) then Mr David Basham
- Australian Government Department of Agriculture – Dr Robyn Martin
- Australian Livestock Exporters Council – Ms Alison Penfold
- Australian Lot Feeders' Association – Mr Dougal Gordon
- Australian Meat Industry Council – Dr John Langbridge and Mr Christian Mulders
- Cattle Council of Australia – Mr Bob Barwell
- PrimeSafe Victoria (representing State/Territory Meat Industry Authorities) – Dr Brendan Tatham
- Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries – Dr Allison Crook (representing State/Territory Agriculture Departments)
- Sheepmeat Council of Australia –Dr Kat Ferme
- Australian Pork Limited – Ms Deb Kerr
- Goat Industry Council of Australia – Mr Patrick Hutchinson
- Dairy Australia – Dr Robin Condron
- Australian Renderers Association – Mr Dennis King
- Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association – Mr Andy Madigan
- Australian Livestock Marketing Association – Mr Tony White (to May 2015) then Ms Kate McGilvray
- Wool Producers Australia – Ms Jo Hall

Observers:

- Animal Health Australia – Mr Duncan Rowland
- Meat and Livestock Australia Ltd – Ms Christine Pitt
- Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority – Dr Jason Lutze
- Red Meat Advisory Council – Mr Angus Hobson

The SAFEMEAT Executive has a number of sub-committees to progress specific SAFEMEAT activities. In 2014-15 the sub-committees were:

- National Vendor Declaration (NVD) Management Committee – Chair: Mr Stephen Bailey (SAFEMEAT)
- NLIS (Cattle) Advisory Committee – Chair: Mr Peter Milne (SAFEMEAT)
- NLIS Monitoring Committee – Chair: Mr Stephen Bailey (SAFEMEAT)
- NLIS (Sheep and Goats) Advisory Committee – Chair: Mr Ian Feldtmann (SAFEMEAT)
- NLIS (Pork) Consultative Committee – Chair: Mr Andrew Johnson (Australian Pork Limited)
- NLIS Standards Committee – Chair: Mr Keith Adams (SAFEMEAT)
- SAFEMEAT Bobby Calves Residue Solutions Taskforce – Chair: Mr Bob Barwell (Cattle Council of Australia)
- Stockfeed Working Group – Chair: Mr Dugald MacLachlan (Australian Government Department of Agriculture)
- Targeted Testing Working Group – Chair: Mr Bob Barwell (Cattle Council of Australia)
- Device-Based Status Working Group – Chair: Mr Peter Merrell (Australian Government Department of Agriculture)
- Cotton Trash Working Group – Chair: Mr Bob Barwell (Cattle Council of Australia)
- Rodenticide Working Group – Chair: Mr Stephen Bailey (SAFEMEAT)

SAFEMEAT Secretariat

The SAFEMEAT Secretariat is located within the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, 18 Marcus Clarke Street, Canberra.

Funding

Funding to attend meetings and undertake projects is provided by the individual SAFEMEAT members.

Funding for the SAFEMEAT Secretariat is provided through Meat & Livestock Australia Ltd and the Australian Meat Processor Corporation. The cost of running the Secretariat was $200,000 for the 2014-15 financial year.

Significant progress was made on the SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review. The Review has the endorsed vision – *"A fully auditable and responsive whole-of-chain risk management biosecurity system that maintains market access, food safety and product integrity (including traceability and animal welfare)"* – that is supported by a range of principles and initiatives to form the foundation of a roadmap for the future.

The key principles for the SAFEMEAT Initiatives are:

• A strengthened on-farm risk management system

• A whole-of-chain risk management approach (encompassing producers, saleyards, feedlots, transporters, live exporters and processors)

• Strengthened industry assurance programs and improved integration throughout the supply chain

• Revised role of the jurisdictions in compliance monitoring to reflect the new compliance model – monitor, support, enforce

• Effective communication program to drive uptake and improvement

• Sustainable funding model to ensure the effectiveness of the system into the future

With the decline in state-based monitoring programs and a general trend away from traditional approaches to regulation, the level of assurance expected by customers cannot be delivered solely through a traditional 'compliance through government inspection' model. This highlights the need for independently verified industry assurance programs to become the vehicle for industries to demonstrate that they are meeting nationally agreed standards in relation to food safety, biosecurity and product integrity.

The broadening of scope of industries assurance programs will strengthen these programs, complementing government oversight, and providing a framework that not only enhances system integrity and performance, but also ensures that the returns on industry and government investment are maximised.

The delivery of a responsive and fully integrated through-chain risk management system, accompanied by technology enhancements to drive operational efficiencies, will ensure that Australia's systems continue to be recognised as world's best practice, underpinning the sustainability and prosperity of the meat and livestock industries into the future.

An expertise-based Steering Group has been driving implementation of Review recommendations. Key areas of Steering Group activity are reported on page 13.

The final report of the Steering Group was presented to SAFEMEAT Partners on 21 August 2015.

Annual reviews of the SAFEMEAT Business Plan and Incident Response Manual were completed to reflect all current activities.

SAFEMEAT endorsed equivalency assessment criteria and a national recognition approval protocol as the documented process for formally assessing and recognising on-farm food safety systems as 'equivalent' for the sourcing of livestock under the Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production and Transportation of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption (AS:4696). A dairy industry application is the first to be assessed under the protocol.

In June 2015, SAFEMEAT determined that, from 16 November 2015, only the current LPA NVD (version 0413) can be used for livestock going into the food chain, for auction or to feedlots. This is to ensure that Australia continues to meet the export requirements of our international trade partners, and to address issues with outdated NVD versions. It was agreed to develop a comprehensive communications strategy to ensure that all stakeholders will be aware of the new requirements well before the implementation date.

SAFEMEAT was instrumental in FSANZ convening a National Food Incident Response Planning workshop in November which was attended by representatives of all primary production sectors.

SAFEMEAT established specific working groups to:

- investigate the potential use of cotton trash as drought feed

- co-ordinate activities to address rodenticide residue issues in the pig industry

- address inconsistencies between published SAFEMEAT and APVMA Export Slaughter Interval (ESI) advice

- review the SAFEMEAT Plague Locust Control Brochure

- develop a national standard for the registration of goat depots to control the movement of untagged harvested goats going direct to slaughter

Antibacterial residues in bobby calves have been a concern for a number of years and continue to be detected in the structured residue monitoring program. Improvements have been noted over recent calving seasons as a result of the actions taken by industry and regulatory agencies in relation to these detections.

NLIS involved substantial work for members this year through the various NLIS committees. This included:

- developing the NLIS Cattle Standards to replace the 2005 Operational Rules

- continuing to liaise with Commonwealth and State Governments to seek the inclusion of NLIS in Abattoir Approved Programs, including a requirement for both in-house and external verification checking
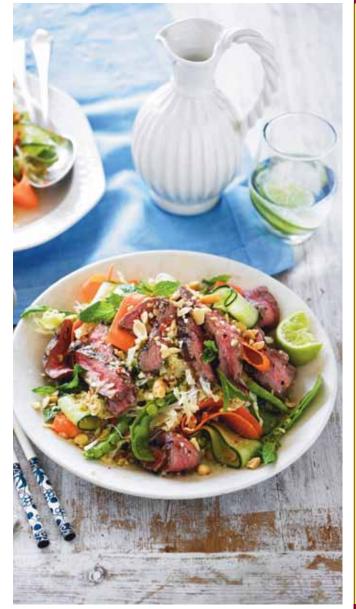
- working with the Australian Livestock Exporters' Council to improve compliance with NLIS requirements in the livestock export sector

- working with the Livestock Production Assurance Advisory Committee (LPAAC) to ensure a greater level of scrutiny of producer compliance with NLIS requirements relating to property-to-property movements.

The issue of national consistency in interpreting and applying NLIS rules by the jurisdictions continued to be raised and strategies to overcome these differences are regularly discussed in various SAFEMEAT forums.

In October, Agriculture Ministers agreed that State and Territory governments will make necessary improvements to NLIS Sheep and Goats by building on the systems already in place. Each jurisdiction will aim for improved traceability, either by enhancing the current mob-based system or by introducing electronic identification ear tags. The NLIS Sheep and Goats Advisory Committee has established a working group to develop a business plan comprising strategies and actions to foster a nationally consistent approach.

The development of an integrated electronic NVD system continued under the oversight of the SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review Steering Group.

The Chairs of the SAFEMEAT committees met in March to discuss key issues, communication between the committees and other matters relevant to the successful implementation of SAFEMEAT strategies. This meeting is now an annual event.

SAFEMEAT Business Plan

The strategic directions of SAFEMEAT are set out in its Business Plan. The Business Plan outlines the strategic approach to managing red meat and pork safety and hygiene within Australia and seeks to achieve this through a number of targeted projects under the following nine key programs of industry priority:

1. Standards and Regulations
2. Emergency Management
3. Animal Diseases
4. Residues
5. Pathogens
6. Systems Development and Management
7. Communications and Education
8. Emerging Issues
9. SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review Recommendations

Under each key program there are defined projects, with milestones, funding arrangements and responsibilities:

1. Standards and Regulations

The purpose of this program is to contribute to the implementation of nationally consistent standards and regulations relating to meat safety and hygiene.

In doing this, SAFEMEAT will support the development of harmonised and scientifically-based national and international standards and promote minimisation of regulations that are necessary to produce safe food, ensure consumer protection, and prevent market disruption.

2. Emergency Management

The purpose of this program is to ensure that effective emergency management strategies are in place and activated at appropriate times to minimise market disruption.

3. Animal Diseases (as they relate to food safety)

This program is designed to ensure the red meat and pork sectors deal effectively with food safety issues arising from disease outbreaks in cattle, sheep, goats and pigs.

The objectives are to minimise market disruption arising from the public health aspects of animal disease outbreaks and to contribute, where appropriate, to the development and implementation of national policies and programs designed to protect Australia from exotic animal diseases.

4. Residues

This program aims to develop and implement sound management systems to deliver safe and hygienic food with adequate and nationally consistent government standards and regulations relating to residues.

SAFEMEAT will actively promote the observance of withholding periods and export slaughter intervals in order to prevent residues being present above the corresponding maximum residue limit for all markets. It is the objective of this program that any potential residue problems will be identified and appropriate management strategies will be developed and implemented, taking into consideration cost-efficient and equitable funding implications. This will minimise market disruption arising from residue violations.

5. Pathogens

The purpose of this program is to implement sound management systems to deliver safe and hygienic food that meets consumer and regulatory requirements. This involves the development of pathogen and microbiological quality management programs with an emphasis on risk management as appropriate.

6. Systems Development and Management

This program enables SAFEMEAT to facilitate the development and establishment of key management systems to underpin red meat and pork safety and hygiene programs in order to provide a through-chain, 'world best practice' approach for managing food safety risks in the red meat and pork industries.

7. Communication and Education

The purpose of this program is to facilitate communication, education and awareness of meat safety and hygiene issues by all stakeholders. Specifically, to establish a fully integrated and effective communication network within and outside SAFEMEAT, to encourage the ongoing development of expertise on meat safety and hygiene within the industry, government and academia and to raise the level of awareness of food safety and hygiene within the broader community.

8. Emerging Issues

The purpose of this program is to monitor and implement a range of strategic initiatives in relation to emerging issues to ensure that the industry is positioned to meet changing market and consumer demands as they arise. Issues such as advancements in biotechnology policy are closely monitored, both domestically and internationally, to ensure a well-informed industry.

9. SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review Recommendations

The purpose of this program is to action recommendations to deliver more robust industry assurance programs that incentivise participation and uptake, promote greater efficiency in their delivery, and encourage continual improvement.

The delivery of a responsive and fully integrated through-chain risk management system, accompanied by technology enhancements to drive operational efficiencies, will ensure that Australia's systems continue to be recognised as world's best practice, underpinning the sustainability and prosperity of the meat and livestock industries into the future.

The progress SAFEMEAT made against the nine key programs in the Business Plan is detailed below.

1. Standards and Regulations

SAFEMEAT, through its member network, continued to promote international acceptance of HACCP-based quality assurance schemes to assist with the recognition and acceptance of major industry and government initiatives in order to maintain and enhance Australia's position as a world leader in the export of meat and meat products.

SAFEMEAT continued to provide input directly into the development of the Primary Production and Processing Standard for Meat and Meat Products being developed by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ). Individual SAFEMEAT members were also involved as representatives of their respective industry bodies. This Standard comes into effect on 31 July 2015.

On an on-going basis SAFEMEAT works with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) and contributes to assessments, as required, on national agricultural and veterinary chemical registration issues, particularly where ESIs and WHPs need to meet sensitive export market requirements.

SAFEMEAT is a contributor to the development of the Australian Feed Standard for Food Producing Animals.

2. Emergency Management

During the year, no incidents arose which necessitated SAFEMEAT to initiate any emergency management arrangements. However, on an ongoing basis, SAFEMEAT working groups continue to refine strategies to deal with the market access impacts of food safety incidents should they arise.

The SAFEMEAT Incident Response Manual was reviewed during the year to ensure that it is structured to address any emergencies.

It is important to facilitate appropriate linkages between SAFEMEAT emergency management arrangements and other related arrangements including AUSVETPLAN, the National Food Incident Response Plan and industry emergency response plans. SAFEMEAT was a key contributor to a FSANZ National Food Incident Response Planning workshop in November which was attended by representatives of all primary production sectors with the purpose of sharing knowledge, promoting linkages and identifying the established national response processes and plans and communication channels.

3. Animal Diseases (as they relate to food safety)

SAFEMEAT, through its representative bodies and associated technical committees, continued to actively promote Australia's food safety measures in order to maintain market confidence in the safety of Australian livestock products.

SAFEMEAT kept a watching brief, and provided advice as appropriate, on international and domestic developments regarding zoonotic diseases that have the potential to impact on Australia's livestock and meat industries. Incorrect media reports of a human BSE case in Sydney at the end of June required the coordinated effort of a number of government agencies to properly inform the issue.

It is to be noted that FSANZ progressed a number of BSE food safety risk assessments. Mexico and the United States were assigned Category 1 status (ie products can be exported to Australia subject to meeting certification requirements and any required quarantine measures). FSANZ has commenced desk assessments for Argentina, Japan and Sweden and are waiting to be assigned. Risk analyses related to market access requests for fresh beef import from the United States, Canada, Japan and the Netherlands are being considered by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture.

Animal Health Australia (AHA) provided a strong platform for the national co-ordination of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE) related projects, focussing on the collection of surveillance data (National TSE Surveillance Program) and inspections of the stock feed chain (Ruminant Feed Ban) in order to maintain Australia's internationally recognised status of 'negligible risk' for BSE.

4. Residues

Since its establishment in 1998, SAFEMEAT has had a key role in:

- identifying potential residue problems and developing appropriate strategies to deal with them taking into consideration cost efficient and equitable funding implications

- minimising market disruption arising from residue incidents

- actively promoting the observance of WHPs and ESIs in order to prevent residues being present above the corresponding MRL for all markets

SAFEMEAT also assists in progressing residue monitoring activities through the:

- National Organochlorine Residue Management Program (NORM) program

- National Antimicrobial Residue Minimisation (NARM) program

- Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing (TART) program

- Sheep Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing (START) program

- Device-Based Status Working Group

The NARM Program continued during 2014-15. Export NARM sampling for 2014-15 consisted of a total of 21,377 samples, of which 26 contained residues and 13 were violative residues.

Domestic NARM sampling for the spring and autumn period found 0.22% of calves with violative residues during the spring and 0.37% of calves with violative residues during autumn.

During 2014-15, the NRS reported that 970 cattle had been tested under their random sampling program for antibacterials, including 32 bobby calves. No violative residues were detected in the samples from bobby calves.

The Bobby Calf Residues Solution Taskforce has continued to work on a range of options to help minimise the number of residue violations in bobby calves.

The TART for cattle and the sheep equivalent, START, continued to operate in 2014-15. There were no detections in the four sheep samples, and one above MRL detection in the 14 cattle samples with the required corrective action taken.

The management of residue risks is partly controlled through the assignment of statuses for individual animals or for 'at risk' properties. Meat processors are expected to take action where these statuses are flagged. SAFEMEAT is working with all jurisdictions to ensure these statuses are managed in a nationally consistent manner.

SAFEMEAT is working with RMAC, the jurisdictions and the processing sector to develop a response mechanism where breaches of Australia's HGP requirements are detected or suspected.

SAFEMEAT established specific working groups to:

- investigate the potential use of cotton trash as drought feed however, due to market risk perceptions, its use was not endorsed

- coordinate activities to address rodenticide residue issues in the pig industry. This work is ongoing.

- address inconsistencies between SAFEMEAT and APVMA Export Slaughter Interval (ESI) advice, with agreement that a single (APVMA) list be maintained

- review the SAFEMEAT Plague Locust Control Brochure to ensure it was updated to reflect current permit treatment advice

5. Pathogens

The work under this key program continues to be supported by MLA's research and development (R&D) program.

R&D projects are conducted by MLA in the areas of chemical usage, microbiological food safety, biotechnology and post-mortem inspection.

One of the key components of this program is related to microbiological food safety and examines the use of scientific approaches to understanding food-safety risks and develops systems and new technologies to manage identified risks.

The Program Advisory Group provides additional guidance and oversight of the microbiological program.

In recognition of current issues concerning the presence of antibiotic resistance bacteria in the red meat supply chain, SAFEMEAT continued to support research to address the prevalence of antimicrobial resistant bacteria in the supply chain.

In 2014-15, food safety research and development continued to focus on the ongoing concerns regarding the Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (STEC) and of the seven serogroups of interest to the US. This work is of extremely high importance for ongoing market access to the US. A through-chain symposium to discuss MLA projects was held in March.

The 2014-15 activities in MLA's food safety research and development program continue to be reported against specific projects, budget allocations and timelines and are linked, where appropriate, to the SAFEMEAT Business Plan.

6. Systems Development and Management

There were a number of NLIS developments during 2014-15.

The NLIS (Cattle) Standards (to replace the 2005 Operational Rules) were endorsed. These provide a minimum set of standards which can be adopted into legislation and enable jurisdictions to impose additional requirements if necessary. They set out the responsibilities of all participants in the production chain and enable NLIS to become auditable via industry food safety and quality assurance schemes.

The NLIS Standards Committee has reported that there are:

– Five fully accredited cattle devices and six conditionally accredited cattle devices
– Three fully accredited sheep RFIDs and four conditionally accredited sheep RFIDs
– 18 fully accredited sheep visual devices and 11 conditionally accredited visual devices
– 14 devices under trial, involving around 65 properties.

A review into all PIC and device-based statuses was commissioned by MLA. A working group was formed to develop options for adopting the recommendations of the review.

The NLIS Database Refresh project has progressed with the foundation phase – which includes overall new system design and architecture – now completed, The build phase started in October 2014. Complete system delivery is anticipated in June 2016.

NLIS Ltd has now finalised the development required for all four EU2 Pathway-related statuses.

Tag-free options for the movement of rangeland goats have been under active consideration with a communication strategy developed for industry operators, a working group formed to develop an agreed standard for goat depot registration, re-defining the definition of rangeland goat in the Goat NVD and the creation of a goat depot NLIS account.

The NLIS (Sheep and Goats) Advisory Committee focussed its activity on maintaining the current NLIS (Sheep and Goats) mob-based system, while at the same time establishing a working group to consider the strategies and actions necessary to address the outcomes of the Decision Regulatory Impact Statement "Implementation of Improvements" to the National Livestock Identification System for Sheep and Goats. The working group is currently developing a business plan for presentation to SAFEMEAT, with a key focus on ensuring AGMIN targets of 98% compliance for short run and 95% compliance for long run targets are met.

SAFEMEAT has been monitoring the roll out, on a voluntary basis, of pig movement reporting using the agreed NLIS (Pork) Business Rules. At the end of June 2015, the majority of export and domestic pig processors were uploading kill details to the PigPass database and a significant number of pig producers were reporting P2P movements. SAFEMEAT expects to introduce a requirement for full pig movement reporting during 2015-16.

SAFEMEAT was provided with regular reports of NLIS monitoring activity conducted by State and Territory jurisdictions during 2014-15.

Progress on implementing a national PIC register has become the responsibility of Animal Health Australia.

NLIS Database statistics are as follows:

Cattle

From July 1 2014 – June 30 2015
– 5,446,600 database transactions
– 32,558,398 devices transferred

As at 1 July 2015
– 243,917 PICs with devices transferred or issued
– 71,029 database accounts

Total active devices		62,042,377
- Active devices	62,042,377	
Total inactive devices		94,361,279
- Devices recorded as killed	84,276,684	
- Devices on EEEEEEEE	6,138,522	
- Devices moved to 'DECEASED'	60,706	
- Devices on AAAAAAAA	1,332,495	
- Devices flagged as Inactive	2,552,872	
Total devices on database		156,403,656

Sheep

From July 1 2014 – June 30 2015
– 38,972,280 million sheep in 298,746 mobs moved
– 26,026,796 million sheep in 123,306 mobs killed
– 11,339 database accounts with Sheep selected

Goat

From July 1 2014 – June 30 2015
– 2,869,796 goats in 13,611 mobs moved
– 1,830,446 goats in 5,844 mobs killed
– 2,901 database accounts with goats selected

7. Communication and Education

SAFEMEAT continues to:

- meet face-to-face (Partners twice yearly and Executives twice yearly) to address all matters related to its terms of reference

- hold teleconferences as circumstances determine (these were particularly relevant for the working groups on drought feeding (cotton trash), rodenticide residues, ESI list rationalisation and plague locust brochure update)

- keep AGSOC and AGMIN informed of significant developments

- produce educational material as needed

- maintain linkages to other committees by providing them with updates on the progress of the work outlined in the Business Plan

- post material on current issues on the SAFEMEAT website

- respond to media enquiries as they arise

8. Emerging Issues

SAFEMEAT maintains a watching brief on food chain security and critical infrastructure protection issues and participates in numerous forums to discuss matters of concern.

SAFEMEAT is regularly briefed on current and emerging market access issues for Australian exports by the Australian Department of Agriculture. Such briefings assist in communicating issues specific to certain markets to the relevant industry stakeholders and in coordinating an industry wide response.

Antimicrobial resistance has re-emerged as an issue and SAFEMEAT endorsed incorporating further work into research programs to address the prevalence of antimicrobial resistant bacteria in the red meat supply chain.

9. SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review Recommendations

The SAFEMEAT-endorsed vision for the Review is for a fully auditable and responsive whole-of-chain risk management biosecurity system that maintains market access, food safety and product integrity (including traceability and animal welfare).

To meet the objectives of the Review:

- A strengthened on-farm risk management system

- A whole-of-chain risk management approach (encompassing producers, saleyards, feedlots, transporters, live exporters and processors)

- Strengthened industry assurance programs and improved integration throughout the supply chain

- Revised role of the jurisdictions in compliance monitoring to reflect the new compliance model – *monitor, support, enforce*

- Effective communication program to drive uptake and improvement

- Sustainable funding model to ensure the effectiveness of the system into the future

An expertise-based Steering Group was formed to drive implementation of Review recommendations. Key areas of Steering Group activity have been:

- gap analysis comparing requirements for food safety, biosecurity, traceability and animal welfare with industry assurance programs (the gap analysis has resulted in recommendations in the areas of animal welfare, biosecurity, traceability and food safety)

- LPA program – broadening scope (animal welfare and biosecurity standards), elearning, online accreditation and recommitment

- integrated communications for NLIS, LPA and NVD to provide for coordinated delivery and consistent messaging

- National PIC Register

- integrated electronic NVD system (incorporating ownership and management, data capture and storage standards, system business rules, licensing of software providers)

- funding for programs – consideration of options to maintain and enhance programs

- consideration of the future government role, particularly in recognising industry programs to support compliance and monitoring

- system ownership and management (including streamlined SAFEMEAT committees structure)

Annual Report Acronyms

AGMIN	Agriculture Ministers Forum
AGSOC	Agriculture Senior Officials Committee
AHA	Animal Health Australia
AMIC	Australian Meat Industry Council
APVMA	Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
ESI	Export Slaughter Interval
EUCAS	European Union Cattle Accreditation Scheme
FSANZ	Food Standards Australia and New Zealand
FSIS	US Food Safety and Inspection Service
GICA	Goat Industry Council of Australia
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
LPA	Livestock Production Assurance
MINTRAC	National Meat Industry Training Advisory Council Limited
MLA	Meat and Livestock Australia
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRL	Maximum Residue Limit
NARM	National Antimicrobial Residue Minimisation Program
NLIS	National Livestock Identification System
NORM	National Organochlorine Residue Management Program
NRS	National Residue Survey
NVD	National Vendor Declaration
QA	Quality Assurance
PIC	Property Identification Code
STEC	Shiga toxin-producing E. coli
R&D	Research and Development
RFID	Radio Frequency Identification Device
RMAC	Red Meat Advisory Council
START	Sheep Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing Program
TART	Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing Program
TSE	Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy
WHP	Withholding Period